

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please amend claims 1-4, 6-12, 15-23 and 25-36 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A copyright management system for managing lease of arbitrary copyrighted information contents to be distributed from [[an]] a copyright information lease service provider to a user, the system comprising:

an information lease management apparatus for adding utilization condition information concerning lease of copyrighted information contents to copyrighted information contents, and processing the information so as to be distributed to the user;

an information processing apparatus for receiving the copyrighted information contents with the utilization condition information distributed from the information lease management apparatus; and

communication means for connecting the information lease management apparatus and information processing apparatus, [[characterized in that]] wherein the information processing apparatus is managed so as to automatically erasing the received copyrighted information contents by using communication means based on the utilization condition information.

2. (Currently Amended) An information lease management system as claimed in claim 1, [[characterized in that]] further comprising an automatically erasable recording medium with [[its]] a time limit storage function, the recording medium storing said copyrighted information contents, is connected to said information processing apparatus, and when a lease

period has expired, the rented copyrighted information contents are automatically erased based on utilization condition information.

3. (Currently Amended) An information lease management system as claimed in claim [[1]] 2, [[characterized in that]] wherein said recording medium has a data erasure mechanism for automatically erasing said copyrighted information contents when the recording medium is removed from said information processing apparatus.

4. (Currently Amended) An information lease management system as claimed in claim 1, [[characterized in that]] wherein a contract concerning lease of said copyrighted information contents is made between said information lease service provider and a user.

5. (Original) An information lease management system as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that Internet, telephone lines, satellite communication line or lease communication lines are used as said communication means.

6. (Currently Amended) [[An]] A copyright management apparatus for managing lease of copyrighted information contents distributed from [[an]] a copyright information lease service provider to a user, the apparatus [[characterized by]] comprising:

data processing means for adding utilization condition information concerning lease information lease to a user to of copyrighted information contents to a user; and

transmission and reception means for distributing to a user the copyrighted information contents having the utilization condition information added thereto by the data processing means

or receiving response information from the user.

7. (Currently Amended) An information lease management apparatus as claimed in claim 6, ~~characterized in that there is provided further comprising~~ a database storing the copyrighted information contents to be leased to said user.

8. (Currently Amended) An information lease management apparatus as claimed in claim 6, ~~[[characterized in that]] further comprising~~ at least menu screen information, describing a title of the copyrighted information contents stored in said database, is provided to ~~[[a]] the~~ user.

9. (Currently Amended) An information lease management apparatus as claimed in claim 6, ~~[[characterized in that]] wherein~~ at least a title of said copyrighted information contents, lease charge and lease period, and a list of said users are integrally managed.

10. (Currently Amended) An information lease management apparatus as claimed in claim 6, ~~[[characterized in that]] wherein, [[in the case where]] when~~ an upper limit of an amount of money predetermined in accordance with a contract is provided, said data processing means obtains a cumulative utilization charge in which lease charges of said copyrighted information contents are cumulated;

compares said upper limit of an amount of money and said cumulative utilization charge with each other; and

present lease rejection of said copyrighted information contents or a change of said upper limit of an amount of money [[in the case where]] when said cumulative utilization charge exceeds said upper limit of amount of money.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for receiving copyrighted information contents leased from [[an]] a copyright information lease service provider to a user, said apparatus [[characterized by]] comprising:

transmission and reception means for receiving copyrighted information contents having added thereto utilization condition information concerning lease information [[lease]] to the user;

data processing means for processing the copyrighted information contents received by the transmission and reception means; and

a recording medium connectable to the data processing means in order to store the copyrighted information contents, wherein the data processing means is provided so as to automatically erase the copyrighted information contents stored in a recording medium based on the utilization condition information.

12. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, [[characterized in]] wherein that said recording medium comprises a data erasure mechanism for, when the recording medium is removed from said data processing means, automatically erasing the copyrighted information contents stored in said storage means.

13. (Original) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that said data erasure mechanism comprises:

 detection means for detecting the fact that the recording medium is removed from said data processing means; and

 control means for controlling disconnection of power supply to storage means based on removal detection information caused by said detection means.

14. (Original) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that, when power supply to said recording medium is disconnected, there is provided a lock mechanism for fixing the recording means to said data processing means.

15. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that there is provided further comprising display means for displaying index information concerning said copyrighted information contents.

16. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 15, [[characterized in that]] wherein at least a menu screen describing a title of said copyrighted information contents is displayed on said display means.

17. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 16, [[characterized in that]] wherein arbitrary copyrighted information contents selected from said menu screen are distributed to said [[storage]] recording medium.

18. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that there is provided further comprising operation means operated so as to input setting information concerning lease of said copyrighted information contents.

19. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, [[characterized in that]] wherein an upper limit of an amount of utilization charge of the copyrighted information contents is set with respect to lease of said copyrighted information contents.

20. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, [[characterized in that]] wherein said utilization condition information contains a control program for selecting whether or not a lease period of said copyrighted information contents is extended.

21. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, [[characterized in that]] wherein, [[in the case where]] when age limitation is set with respect to lease of said copyrighted information contents, said utilization condition information contains a control program for inputting a predetermined user registered password number.

22. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 11, [[characterized in that]] wherein, [[in the case where]] when a lease period of said copyrighted information contents is arbitrarily set, said utilization condition information contains a control program for inputting a lease period of said copyrighted information contents.

23. (Currently Amended) A method of managing lease of copyrighted information contents distributed from [[an]] a copyright information lease service provider to a user by using communication means, said method [[is characterized by]] comprising the steps of:

making a contract concerning lease of copyrighted information contents in advance between the copyright information lease service provider and the user;

adding utilization condition information to copyrighted information contents to be distributed to the user based on the [[contrast]] contract [[on one hand]], and receiving copyrighted information contents having utilization condition information added thereto [[on the other hand]]; and

storing the received copyrighted information contents in a recording medium [[with its]] having an automatically erasable time limit storage function; and

automatically erasing the copyrighted information contents stored in the recording medium based on the utilization condition information.

24. (Original) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 23, characterized in that Internet or communication lines such as telephone line or satellite communication lines are used.

25. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 23, [[characterized in that]] wherein, [[in the case where]] when said recording medium is attached to a data processing unit, [[when]] and said storage medium is removed from said data processing unit, the copyrighted information contents contained in said recording medium is

automatically erased.

26. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 23, [[characterized in that]] further comprising the step of presenting a user [[is presented]] with index information concerning a plurality of copyrighted information contents to be leased to said user.

27. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 26, [[characterized in that]] further comprising the step of displaying at least a menu screen describing a title of said copyrighted information contents [[is displayed]].

28. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 27, [[characterized in that]] further comprising the step of distributing arbitrary copyrighted information contents selected from said menu screen [[is distributed]].

29. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 23, [[characterized in that]] further comprising the step of arbitrarily inputting a lease period of said copyrighted information contents [[are arbitrarily input]] with respect to a lease contract of said copyrighted information contents.

30. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 23, [[characterized in that]] further comprising the step of setting an upper limit of an amount of money for utilization charge of said copyrighted information contents [[is set]] with

respect to a lease contract of said copyrighted information contents.

31. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 30, [[characterized by]] further comprising the steps of:

[[in the case where]] when an upper limit of an amount of money is set with respect to a lease of said copyrighted information contents, obtaining a cumulative utilization charge in which at least lease charges of said copyrighted information contents are cumulated;

comparing said upper limit of an amount of money with said cumulative utilization charge; and

[[in the case where]] when said cumulative utilization charge exceeds said upper limit of an amount of money, presenting lease rejection of said copyrighted information contents or a change of said upper limit of an amount of money.

32. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 23, [[characterized in that]] wherein, [[in the case where]] when age limitation is set with respect to lease of said copyrighted information contents, a predetermined[[,]] user registered password number is input.

33. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 23, [[characterized in that]] further comprising the step of, when a lease period of said copyrighted information contents has expired, [[it is selected]] selecting whether or not the lease period of said copyrighted information contents is extended.

34. (Currently Amended) An information lease management method as claimed in claim 23, [[characterized in that]] further comprising the step of integrally managing at least a title of said copyrighted information contents, lease charge and lease period, and a list of said users [[are integrally managed]].

35. (Currently Amended) A recording medium for recording copyrighted information contents with utilization condition information leased from [[an]] a copyright information lease service provider to a user, [[characterized in that]] comprising, when a predetermined lease period has expired, copyrighted information contents stored in the recording medium is automatically erased based on said utilization condition information.

36. (Currently Amended) A recording medium as claimed in claim 35, [[characterized in that]] wherein, [[in the case where]] when said recording medium is attached to data processing means[[, when]] and the recording medium is removed from said data processing means, [[there is provided]] a data erasure mechanism [[for]] automatically [[erasing]] erases the copyrighted information contents stored in the recording medium.

37. (Original) A recording medium as claimed in claim 35, characterized in that, said data erasure mechanism comprises:

detection means for detecting the fact that the recording medium is removed from said data processing means; and

control means for controlling disconnection of power supply to storage means based on removal detection information caused by said detection means.

38. (Original) A recording medium as claimed in claim 35, characterized in that, when power supply to the recording medium is disconnected, there is provided a lock mechanism for fixing the recording medium to said data processing means.